[redacted]

/ /

SECRET

[redacted]

[redacted]

PAGE 001

[redacted] AUG 86

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted] 3 AUGUST 1986 NEW YORK TIMES ARTICLE IN WHICH THE RELATIVES OF A U.S. JOURNALIST, NICHOLAS BLAKE, WHO DISAPPEARED IN GUATEMALA IN 1985 HAVE NOW REACHED THE CONCLUSION THAT GUATEMALAN LEFTIST GUERRILLAS KILLED THE U.S. JOURNALIST AND A FRIEND AND NOT THE GUATEMALAN MILITARY AS THEY INITIALLY AND ERRONEOUSLY BELIEVED.

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

Approved for Release
Date MAY 1999

Z-007

I 18

TITLE: "AMERICANS ACCUSE GUATEMALA REBELS - JOURNALIST'S FAMILY CONCLUDES HE AND COMPANION WERE KILLED BY GUERRILLAS" BY [redacted]

STEPHEN KINZER, SPECIAL TO THE NEW YORK TIMES

"THE FAMILY OF AN AMERICAN JOURNALIST WHO DISAPPEARED IN GUATEMALA LAST YEAR HAS CONCLUDED THAT HE AND A COMPANION WERE CAPTURED AND KILLED BY GUERRILLAS.

THE JOURNALIST, NICK BLAKE, 27 YEARS OLD, OF PHILADELPHIA, AND GRIFFIN DAVIS, 38, AN AMERICAN WHO LIVED IN GUATEMALA, DISAPPEARED IN MARCH 1985 WHILE TRAVELING IN A REMOTE AREA OF NORTHERN GUATEMALA WHERE REBELS ARE ACTIVE.

THE BLAKE FAMILY'S ACCUSATION COULD BE POLITICALLY SIGNIFICANT IN THE UNITED STATES, WHERE THE REAGAN ADMINISTRATION HAS BEEN SEEKING TO RENEW MILITARY AID TO GUATEMALA. THE AID WAS HALTED AFTER AMERICAN OFFICIALS CRITICIZED GUATEMALA'S HUMAN-RIGHTS RECORD IN THE LATE 1970'S.

SEVERAL SENIOR AMERICAN OFFICIALS, INCLUDING VICE PRESIDENT BUSH, HAVE SHOWN ACTIVE INTEREST IN THE CASE. IN NOVEMBER, EIGHT UNITED STATES SENATORS APPEALED TO THE STATE DEPARTMENT TO MAKE THE CASE A DIPLOMATIC PRIORITY.

MR. BLAKE'S BROTHERS HAVE EXTENSIVELY INVESTIGATED THE CASE AND HAVE MADE SEVERAL VISITS TO GUATEMALA. IN TELEPHONE INTERVIEWS FROM THE UNITED STATES THIS WEEK, THEY SAID THEY BELIEVED THEY HAD DETERMINED WHAT HAD HAPPENED TO THE TWO MEN AFTER THEY SET OUT TO FIND GUERRILLAS TO INTERVIEW.

"THEY WERE HELD FOR A MONTH AND THEN EXECUTED," SAID ONE BROTHER, SAM BLAKE, 24. "WE BELIEVE THE E.G.P. KNOWS WHERE THE BODIES ARE, AND WE WANT THEM TO TELL US."

HE WAS USING THE SPANISH INITIALS FOR THE GUERRILLA ARMY OF THE POOR, THE LARGEST OF SEVERAL MARXIST FORCES THAT HAVE BEEN FIGHTING FOR YEARS TO SEIZE POWER IN GUATEMALA.

THOUSANDS OF GUATEMALANS HAVE DISAPPEARED OR BEEN KILLED IN RECENT YEARS, AND MANY ARE WIDELY BELIEVED TO HAVE BEEN VICTIMS OF SQUADS WITH TIES TO THE POLICE OR THE MILITARY. MR. BLAKE'S RELATIVES AT FIRST SUSPECTED THE ARMY WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ABDUCTION.

SAM BLAKE PROVIDED A COPY OF A LETTER HE SAID HE AND HIS BROTHER RANDY, 25, SENT LAST MONTH TO A SENIOR LEADER OF THE GUERRILLA GROUP, ROLANDO MORAN. THE BROTHERS SOUGHT UNSUCCESSFULLY TO MEET WITH MR. MORAN ON A VISIT TO MEXICO THIS YEAR.

IN THEIR LETTER THE BROTHERS APPEALED FOR A PRIVATE EXPLANATION OF WHAT HAPPENED TO THE MISSING MEN, AND FOR INFORMATION ABOUT FINDING THEIR BODIES. THEY SAID THAT IF SUCH INFORMATION WAS NOT FORTHCOMING, THEY WOULD MAKE THEIR ACCUSATIONS PUBLIC, PUBLISH ADVERTISEMENTS IN GUATEMALAN NEWSPAPERS DENOUNCING THE REBELS AND SUPPORT NEW AMERICAN MILITARY AID FOR GUATEMALA.

THE LETTER WAS SENT THROUGH CONTACTS IN WASHINGTON, MEXICO CITY, AND MANAGUA, BUT THE BLAKES SAID THEY RECEIVED NO RESPONSE.

NICK BLAKE, A FREELANCE REPORTER WHO HAD PUBLISHED ARTICLES IN SEVERAL AMERICAN NEWSPAPERS AND MAGAZINES, WAS

DESCRIBED IN THE LETTER AS "A NEUTRAL, LEFT-ORIENTED JOURNALIST."

HE TOLD FRIENDS HE WAS PLANNING A TRIP INTO THE GUATEMALAN HIGHLANDS SO HE COULD WRITE ABOUT THE ELUSIVE GUERRILLA FORCE.

AFTER THE DISAPPEARANCE OF MR. BLAKE AND MR. DAVIS, THE BLAKE FAMILY TURNED FOR HELP TO POLITICALLY CONNECTED FRIENDS IN THE UNITED STATES AND SUPPORTERS IN GUATEMALA. AMERICAN DIPLOMATS HERE PERSUADED THE GOVERNMENT TO SEND A LARGE NUMBER OF SOLDIERS TO SEARCH THE AREA WHERE THE MAN HAD LAST BEEN SEEN, AND THE CASE WAS WIDELY PUBLICIZED IN THE LOCAL PRESS.

"I BELIEVE THAT THE GUERRILLAS WERE ASKING THEMSELVES WHO THIS BLAKE WAS, THAT HE COULD PROVOKE SUCH A MAJOR RESPONSE," RANDY BLAKE SAID.. "WITH A MASSIVE ARMY PRESENCE SUDDENLY MATERIALIZING UP THERE, THEY HAD TO ABANDON THEIR CAMP, AND THEY THOUGHT THEY WOULD BE COMPROMISING THEIR SECURITY IF THEY JUST RELEASED NICK AND GRIFF."

SAM AND RANDY BLAKE WORKED WITH A PRIVATE DETECTIVE IN GUATEMALA AND CONDUCTED WHAT THEY SAID WERE HUNDREDS OF INTERVIEWS. IN MARCH, THEY MET WITH GUATEMALA'S NEW CIVILIAN PRESIDENT, VINICIO CEREZO, WHO PUT A MILITARY HELICOPTER AT THEIR DISPOSAL. THEY WERE FLOWN TO NORTHERN QUICAG PROVINCE, WHERE THE TWO MEN WERE LAST SEEN.

"WHILE WE WERE UP THERE, I WAS SURPRISED AT HOW NERVOUS THE ARMY PILOTS WERE," SAM BLAKE SAID. "THEY KEPT THE COPTER GOING AND DIDN'T WANT TO STAY MORE THAN 10 MINUTES. THE CIVIL PATROL LEADERS THERE SAID THEY DON'T GO MORE THAN A MILE OUTSIDE OF TOWN. IT WAS CLEAR THAT THE PLACE IS, IF NOT GUERRILLA TERRITORY, AT LEAST CLOSE TO IT."

LOS AMERICANOS ACUSAN A LOS REBELDES GUATEMALTECOS
"LA FAMILIA DEL PERIODISTA LLEGA A LA CONCLUSION DE QUE EL Y SU COMPANERO FUERON MUERTOS POR LOS GUERRILLEROS"

POR STEPHEN KINZER
ESPECIAL PARA "THE NEW YORK TIMES"

GUATEMALA, JULIO 31- LA FAMILIA DE UN PERIODISTA NORTEAMERICANO QUE DESAPARECIO EN GUATEMALA EL ANO PASADO HA LLEGADO A LA CONCLUSION DE QUE EL Y SU COMPANERO FUERON CAPTURADOS Y MUERTOS POR GUERRILLEROS.

EL PERIODISTA, NICK BLAKE, DE 27 ANOS DE EDAD, DE FILADELFIA Y GRIFFIN DAVIS, DE 38 ANOS, UN NORTEAMERICANO QUE VIVIA EN GUATEMALA, DESAPARECIERON MIENTRAS VIAJABAN POR UN AREA LEJANA DEL NORTE DE GUATEMALA DONDE HAY ACTIVIDAD REBELDE.

LA ACUSACION DE LA FAMILIA BLAKE PODRIA TENER SIGNIFICACION POLITICA EN LOS ESTADOS UNIDOS, DONDE LA ADMINISTRACION DE REAGAN HA ESTADO TRATANDO DE RENOVAR LA AYUDA MILITAR PARA GUATEMALA. LA AYUDA FUE INTERRUMPIDA CUANDO LOS FUNCIONARIOS NORTEAMERICANOS CRITICARON EL INDICE DE LOS DERECHOS HUMANOS EN GUATEMALA A FINALES DE LOS '70.

VARIOS IMPORTANTES FUNCIONARIOS AMERICANOS, INCLUYENDO EL VICE-PRESIDENTE BUSH, HAN MOSTRADO INTERES EN ACTUAR EN EL CASO. EN NOVIEMBRE, OCHO SENADORES AMERICANOS APELARON AL

DEPARTAMENTO DE ESTADO PARA QUE TOMARA ESTE CASO COMO UNA PRIORIDAD.

LOS HERMANOS DEL SR. BLAKE HAN INVESTIGADO EXTENSAMENTE EL CASO Y HAN HECHO VARIAS VISITAS A GUATEMALA. EN ENTREVISTAS TELEFONICAS DESDE LOS ESTADOS UNIDOS EN ESTA SEMANA, ELLOS DIJERON QUE CREIAN HABER DETERMINADO LO QUE LES SUCEDIO A LOS DOS HOMBRES DESPUES DE QUE SALIERON PARA ENCONTRAR LOS GUERRILLEROS PARA ENTREVISTARLOS.

"MANTENIDOS CAUTIVOS POR UN MES"

"ELLOS LOS MANTUVIERON CAUTIVOS POR UN MES Y DESPUES LOS EJECUTARON", DIJO UN HERMANO, SAM BLAKE, DE 24 ANOS. NOSOTROS CREEMOS QUE EL E.G.P. SABE DONDE ESTAN LOS CUERPOS Y QUEREMOS QUE ELLOS NOS LO DIGAN. EL ESTABA USANDO LAS INICIALES ESPANOLAS PARA EL EJERCITO GUERRILLERO DE LOS POBRES, LA MAYOR DE LAS FUERZAS MARXISTAS QUE HAN ESTADO PELEANDO POR ANOS PARA TOMAR EL PODER EN GUATEMALA.

MILES DE GUATEMALTECOS HAN DESAPARECIDO O SIDO ASESINADOS EN LOS ANOS RECIENTES, Y HAY UNA CREENCIA EXTENDIDA DE QUE HAN SIDO VICTIMAS DE ESCUADRONES ENLAZADOS A LA POLICIA Y AL EJERCITO. LOS FAMILIARES DEL SR. BLAKE AL PRINCIPIO SOSPECHARON QUE EL EJERCITO ERA RESPONSABLE DEL SECUESTRO.

SAM BLAKE PROPORCIONO LA COPIA DE UNA CARTA QUE DICE QUE EL Y SU HERMANO RANDY, DE 25 ANOS, ENVIARON EL MES PASADO A UN DIRIGENTE IMPORTANTE DEL GRUPO GUERRILLERO, ROLANDO MORAN. LOS HERMANOS TRATARON INFRUCTUOSAMENTE DE REUNIRSE CON EL SR. MORAN EN UNA VISITA A MEXICO ESTE ANO.

EN SU CARTA, LOS HERMANOS PIDIERON UNA EXPLICACION PRIVADA DE LO QUE SUCEDIO A LOS DESAPARECIDOS Y LA INFORMACION PARA ENCONTRAR SUS CADAVERES. ELLOS DECIAN QUE SI LA INFORMACION NO SE RECIBIA PRONTO, ELLOS HARIAN PUBLICAS SUS ACUSACIONES, PUBLICARIAN ANUNCIOS EN LOS PERIODICOS DE GUATEMALA DENUNCIANDO A LOS REBELDES Y APOYARIAN LA AYUDA MILITAR DE LOS ESTADOS UNIDOS PARA GUATEMALA.

LA CARTA FUE ENVIADA A TRAVES DE CONTACTOS EN WASHINGTON, CIUDAD MEXICO Y MANAGUA, PERO LOS BLAKE DICEN QUE ELLOS NO RECIBIERON RESPUESTA.

NICK BLAKE, UN REPORTERO QUE TRABAJABA POR SU CUENTA, HABIA PUBLICADO ARTICULOS EN VARIOS PERIODICOS Y REVISTAS NORTEAMERICANOS Y SE LE DESCRIBIA EN LA CARTA COMO "UN PERIODISTA NEUTRAL, ORIENTADO HACIA LA IZQUIERDA".

EL DIJO A SUS AMIGOS QUE ESTABA PLANEANDO UN VIAJE A LAS MESETAS DE GUATEMALA PARA PODER ESCRIBIR SOBRE LAS EVASIVAS FUERZAS GUERRILLERAS.

"LA FAMILIA PIDE AYUDA"

DESPUES DE LA DESAPARICION DEL SR. BLAKE Y DEL SR. DAVIS, LA FAMILIA BLAKE SE DIRIGIO A PEDIR COOPERACION A LOS AMIGOS CON CONEXIONES POLITICAS EN LOS ESTADOS UNIDOS Y SUS PARTIDARIOS EN GUATEMALA. LOS DIPLOMATICOS NORTEAMERICANOS DE AQUI CONVENCIERON AL GOBIERNO PARA QUE ENVIARA UN GRAN NUMERO DE SOLDADOS A REGISTRAR EL AREA DONDE LOS HOMBRES HABIAN SIDO VISTOS POR ULTIMA VEZ Y EL CASO FUE AMPLIAMENTE PUBLICADO EN LA

PRENSA LOCAL.

"YO CREO QUE LOS GUERRILLEROS SE PREGUNTABAN A SI MISMOS QUIEN ERA ESTE SR. BLAKE PARA QUE PUDIERA PROVOCAR UNA REACCION TAN GRANDE", DIJO RANDY BLAKE. "CON UNA PRESENCIA MASIVA DEL EJERCITO MATERIALIZANDOSE ALLA, ELLOS TUVIERON QUE ABANDONAR SU CAMPAMENTO Y PENSARON QUE ESTABAN COMPROMETIENDO SU SEGURIDAD SI LIBERTABAN A NICK Y A GRIFF".

SAM Y RANDY BLAKE TRABAJARON CON UN INVESTIGADOR PRIVADO EN GUATEMALA Y LLEVARON A CABO CIENTOS DE ENTREVISTAS SEGUN DIJERON. EN MARZO, SE REUNIERON CON EL NUEVO PRESIDENTE CIVIL DE GUATEMALA, VINICIO CEREZO, QUIEN PUSO A SU DISPOSICION UN HELICOPTERO MILITAR. LOS TRANSPORTARON POR EL AIRE HASTA LA PROVINCIA DE QUICAG, DONDE LOS DOS HOMBRES FUERON VISTOS POR ULTIMA VEZ.

"MIENTRAS ESTABAMOS ALLA, ME SORPRENDIO VER LO NERVIOSOS QUE ESTABAN LOS PILOTOS", DICE SAM BLAKE. "ELLOS CONTINUARON VOLANDO Y NO QUISIERON DETENERSE POR MAS DE 10 MINUTOS. LOS DIRIGENTES DE LA PATRULLA CIVIL DE ALLI DIJERON QUE ELLOS NO SE ALEJARIAN MAS DE UNA MILLA FUERA DE LA CIUDAD. ESTA CLARO QUE EL LUGAR, SI NO ES TERRITORIO GUERRILLERO, ES ALGO QUE SE LO APROXIMA MUCHO".

[redacted]

6x11

[redacted]

I-18